

DIALOGOS: on Gary Hill's Happenstance

S: I was not on a couple of observations that I've not had before, about certain areas that this thing seems to me absolutely to locate. <sup>are located</sup> Certain problems, in a way that would in some way announce itself, as semiotic—I can't think of any other thing that quite does it. <sup>the way this does.</sup> I might be wrong but what I wrote, is this: That several signs refer to the same object, simultaneously given along with them, opens a space that has a multidimensional <sup>is such</sup> ~~ity~~, not created by the mirror-play of recursion, but by the physical—i.e. spatial—temporal—coincidence of sign and reference. And the play of the multiple signs in the attention of the viewer, <sup>is such</sup> that the experimenter, viewer, auditor, reader must scan his own process of attention in order to perceive the object at all. ~~And~~ that the person experiences & "himself" in regions of his subjectivity as reader, auditor, viewer, listener—these different regions <sup>themselves</sup> become objects in the space of the art event among which "he" himself is also at play. So that in order to perceive, <sup>as subject</sup> in the natural situation of having to say, What is this? I am looking at ~~an object~~, the entire subject/object relationship is disordered in an utterly unique way by <sup>splitting</sup> ~~fracturing~~ the subject into five different subjects: the subject that is hearing the voice speak, the subject that is looking at the image, the subject that is watching the words go by, the subject that's correlating the images to the words, not rationally but spontaneously, <sup>grasped</sup> ~~grasped~~ the location of the object itself that one is in the presence of is <sup>grasped</sup> ~~grasped~~ by a play of my own switching my attention to those different areas of myself. And ~~that's~~ that's created spontaneously, not intellectually. <sup>S</sup> ~~It's~~ simply to be there and ~~even~~ to ask the question, What is happening, immediately creates <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ situation in which I'm opened into five different dimensions of my own subjectivity.

<sup>all of</sup>  
Q: What's interesting is that ~~everything about~~ <sup>all of</sup> that could be said about a certain amount of pure poetry but the way in which it is different is the way in which this work is unique.

I mean that sounds like a statement of the ~~the~~ poetics of [the work that interests us].

S: The difference would be that in the poetry we have the poetry present to itself as the signified of the signs, except that ...

Q: Except that it raises the question of all the other things too!...

S: It raises the question but it doesn't spontaneously generate the circumstance in which those ~~things~~ are issued ...

Q: Except the performance situation ...

S: Performance does, sure ... There's something at the moment of the "THIS," when the "THIS" appears and you're seeing the word on the screen, right, and you have the pyramid of the dots moving and the word "THIS" is down here [gestures to screen bottom], and the voice says "This," so that the characteristic of the word "This" which is that it's immediately deictic, <sup>that is,</sup> ~~and~~ it has the possibility of pointing to itself, that ~~and~~ even that act of pointing to itself is split apart, since you're seeing a word

--you're seeing an object that it's pointing to, the object itself is in motion, in such a way that the activity of consciousness seems to be embedded in the <sup>xx</sup> ~~the~~ object itself, that is, the object itself is moving around and pointing to itself ...

N: I mean, part of the intention there ~~is~~ was that before the synchrony of "This" on the screen with the speaking of the word, there are the three dots <sup>[...]</sup> on the screen for "Therefore," but that's a two-dimensional ~~symbol~~ sign/symbol. But then what happens when "This" ... actually is synchronous with the point that makes the vanishing point in a 3-d drawing, which makes it possible for three-dimensionality to occur -- not three-dimensionality as a picture but ~~it's like~~ it's like a symbol at that point of what's going on, from the past up to that point in order for it to go happen ...

Q: Orientation toward the expectation of three-dimensionality; as soon as you have a vanishing point you're oriented toward the expectation of three-dimensionality ...

H: But what I mean in this is that that only becomes like a symbol of three-dimensionality ...

the

S: The three-dimensionality is a multi-dimensionality, and you've got a visual image which is a symbol of three-dimensionality, which is already at least in four dimensions because it's in motion and because every single object in it is moving into the next position, so that the vector of a "This" which points is embedded in every little point along the surface of the object, moving to the next place. The voice is pointing to itself, the ~~xx~~ signified of the word "This" refers to the entire work, possibly, but also to this moment, and also to the vanishing point ...

H: But then what happens after that is set up: still it's sort of referring to pictorial 3-D, and then blows that apart -- not being a single point of attention, but all over the place ...

S: ~~Is the activity,~~ <sup>The</sup> taking ~~the~~ image of the bouncing ball, <sup>[in cartoon ~~songs~~ songs]</sup> the bouncing ball instead of going from word to word is bouncing from different kinds of activity <sup>call it viewer</sup> of the subject, of the subjectivity of the viewer, for the moment. The whole point is that he is viewer, auditor, reader, listener, all simultaneously. And that ball is bouncing <sup>from</sup> those different activities in free play and looking for a point of rest; and you're constantly providing points of rest and then dissolving them in the space that you've created. So one point of rest is, oh we're now dealing with the language of perspective.

H: ~~The points of rest, though, they're almost there at --~~ During the points of rest it's like then the viewer / reader -- the whole thing -- kind of leap-frogs and catches up to that point and <sup>sort of</sup> writes at the point -- it's assuming a certain amount of speed of organizing these things and also presupposes certain second guessing. (yeah) (right)

Q: Well there's always a gap happening. There are few points like the "This" where you have the opportunity for there not to be a gap, by perceiving holistically. But you must perceive holistically almost consciously.

S: But even that is going to be dissolved (right) because the "This" could refer to so many different specific points within the field that you can't

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even be sure it's holistic. That's only one of its possibilities, that it's holistic. (right)

Q: So there's always a gap and the gap is the space in which you are constantly questioning where the text is, <sup>a</sup> (or where the image is, <sup>a</sup> ~~where the image is~~ (or where the event is, <sup>a</sup> or who the person is, <sup>a</sup> (or who you are, <sup>a</sup> ~~as who the person is~~ right.

H: Besides those things happening at the point, it's also repeating a general cycle <sup>a</sup> that has gone on of those words. It goes through that three times.

S: But you're in such <sup>completely</sup> different total worlds at each point that it's ~~unpredictable~~ unpredictable, and you've given up any hope that you're going to be able to rest in an abiding presence of an abiding meaning. You have to surrender.

H: That's what is so odd about it, is that just in terms of straight-forward meaning, as if you read the text ~~at~~ on the paper, it's very simple. It's so <sup>a</sup> inside ~~the~~ the text that it's no longer that text.

Q: You see, that's true of a lot of poetry, too; which is if you turn the poem into a prose statement it sounds stupid (you mean if you read the words just in a straight line.)

S: Your <sup>[OK]</sup> poetry, as being like the language, certain aspects of your poetry being like the language of this <sup>[temp]</sup> in that your desire to determine the temporal presentation so that the actual fleshy quality of the mind-lag from word to word is materially part of what the poem is. That the aeration of the phrasing <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ in an absolute presentational temporality is required in order for the different kinds of meanings that the poem has to ....

Q: That's why I had so much trouble in the 70's with what I was doing because it depended so much on the performance, <sup>[e.g. Stein]</sup> and you <sup>a</sup> used to commonly complain that I wasn't scoring it <sup>S:</sup> right, that you weren't giving enough space to the thing that you actually were doing with it <sup>a</sup>. Right, that I was unwilling to score the way poetry had asked us to score since, say, Pound and Olson and Duncan, to try to

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give you a sense of how you should read it. Because I was trying to create a kind of modular line in which you didn't have any particular reading imposed upon you but the demand for it to be there at all was that you do something like that with it, that you give it some kind of unique space. And the only way I could get across that actual sense of it was by reading it.

S: So the sense was that they were incomplete, that they required some <sup>kind</sup> ~~type~~ of actual, not actualization in the sense of something <sup>potentially</sup> ~~actually~~ in them being brought out by an actualization, but they actually required some kind of contextualization in order for their potentials (to emerge.)

H: Now wouldn't that be similar to Jackson?

Q: No, actually, his things <sup>[more low]</sup> ~~(are more textural)~~ they tell you <sup>very specifically</sup> ~~your~~ what you have to do to <sup>perform it</sup>

H: But as far as on the page (Cage does too) it's not really self-evident what to do.

Q: It depends on the poem, in some cases it is. That the event doesn't occur in any particular slowing down of time. Normal reading time is the adequate time for that because of the way he constructs lines like in the <sup>Light Poems</sup> ~~Light Poems~~.

In fact, that's what's true of most poetry that succeeds in conveying itself, its time, self, its self in time, is that it creates a notational system which if you know how to respond appropriately to that notational system reading a lot of poetry, then you can grasp the event. My work was different in that it deliberately removed that and yet required it be there.

S: I would say that the thing that happens in all of those poems <sup>or</sup> which we easily saw as scoring, <sup>isn't</sup> ~~aren't~~ really scoring at all but really we're going in the opposite direction from scoring. Because scoring means somehow the real event is its presentation and the notation is an indication of some real temporality. What really was involved in the "scoring" of an Olsen or a Creeley or a Duncan, is to create a textual substitute for temporality. So that experiences of temporality, the meanings of those delays and of timing, the

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meaning of the sense of timing, could be something that one could have  
while reading the poem <sup>(on the page)</sup> ~~as it~~ it might actually be taking place in a different  
temporality depending on the particularities of the reader. ~~And then the~~

~~reader himself.~~ <sup>The</sup> post reading his own work, gives you the clue about how  
to read the poem by yourself, rather than gives a true performance of the poem.

(A) You were doing it, moving it out into the other dimension, by saying that  
what <sup>your</sup> ~~text~~ text is is something that requires a temporal completion in the  
performance space ~

Q: Which for me stands for a consciousness completion, that the event occurs  
in the mind. That if you can create the situation where there's a question  
about how the voice is operative, then you raise the question of how the mind  
is operative. (sure) That article that I wrote on Jackson MacLo<sup>was in Paper Air</sup>, where I made  
the point that the reader who has not heard Jackson's voice is, in a sense, the  
free-est but also the poorest. It's a curious kind of paradox that once ~~if~~  
you've heard Jackson perform those poems you can live in them in a different  
way but you are at the same time kind of stuck with his version of it. And  
the ultimate truth of his text is that you not be stuck with his, or anybody's,  
or any personality. And yet ironically, or paradoxically, you really require  
it. ~~add~~ at least I did but of course that was early history, twenty years ago.  
But now maybe the atmosphere is such that people don't need to hear that, they've  
heard enough of that kind of work that they are attuned to the possibility of that  
open space-

<sup>"Hereford Began"</sup>  
S: But reading ~~MacLo's~~ <sup>MacLo's</sup> = you have a whole other level of return to what  
it means to read a Jackson <sup>MacLo's</sup> poem. I feel I don't know anymore. There's another  
point in the connection between your language and Gary's language which is

a curious twist because what I'm coming to feel about this work is that ~~as though~~  
his verbal <sup>is</sup> language is the same as your language, that ~~the~~ the use of language is

~~directly~~

directly related to yours, ~~but that~~ the sense of work, what the work is, is pushing towards another level of closure, actually. Not that it's a closure in the sense that the mind listening to any different element of it closes down, but that you're being driven by ~~this multiplicity~~ <sup>multiple-subjectivity</sup> and by something like an intuition of the coherence of all the different elements, towards a "transcendental perception" of what this thing is. [Q: an perception that you never quite arrive at]. Which a hermeneutics might arrive at, which ~~we~~ <sup>[-did-]</sup> might arrive at. [Q: allow us to dwell in temporarily]. And it brings to the question of where, this is a heavy literary question really, is the question of the kind of ~~transcendental relationship~~ of its symbolic ~~content~~ <sup>content</sup>. That is, the point in which images, embedded in this web of relationships of the different elements, the images stop being images and become symbols. Because what happens in the literary context is that at a certain point an image is no longer an image, it's no longer involved in its <sup>2</sup>idiotic qualities and the fact that it calls up something before the mind's eye. But begins to stand for something that the textuality itself, the words going by, the discursive character of the language, cannot say, but which the whole work is trying to get to. And I think that something like that starts happening in ~~terms of~~ this piece. I mean it almost is a documentary, some kind of statement about the Logos because of the particular <sup>H:</sup> (what's Logos?) <sup>S:</sup> The Logos is the Christ as <sup>Q:</sup> word. (the word made flesh; in the Beginning was the Logos) is the actual text) <sup>S:</sup> The sword-crossed heart, that image at one point. There's a crossed sword inside a heart-shaped image that's like- <sup>H:</sup> (well really it's a cross not a sword) <sup>S:</sup> Part of the transformational sense of it is that surely it's the radiant heart, the holy cross, you get it ~~where~~ there and it's in a place. And you've got the word that's surrounded by nothing. And the whole notion of Happenstance is <sup>Kairos</sup> ~~about~~ as finding these moments of something very magical and special about the appearance of certain moments (~~On-ones~~ <sup>Kairos?</sup>) (Is there

a star thing called <sup>Kia. 005</sup> ~~Shores?~~) Well the configuration of the star of Bethlehem at the moment of the birth of Christ would be an instance of something called <sup>Kia. 005.</sup> ~~Shores.~~ Which means like the particular moment in history, particular moment in real time when there is a moment of grace. A moment when something descends through the Logos or through the Holy Spirit and <sup>[n]</sup> you've got both. You have all the major Christian symbols moving in a space which creates wonder in relationship to them. That's what I would say is where the symbolism is loaded. Is that in the space of all this going on, and all this transformation, there's a sense of wonder in relationship to very specific images. And the image is the heart-cross-light, <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ luminous heart, in transformation. The descent of dove-like words, a rain of language-

H: There's also this thing which I haven't said before, There's this sort of fairy tale in the general sense. Like, <sup>cross</sup> ~~cross~~ my heart and hope to die, and that's a child's thing. And also I should show you this other text I wrote when I first show <sup>1</sup> this I read it first and it was written to be read before then show this and read it again and then show this again. And it has in it "sticks and stones will break my bones but words will never hurt me" <sup>5r</sup> which people are chosen before hand and when I come to this part where that overlaps with lying on a bed of sticks, I pause and they say this chorus from the audience and then I continue on. When I wrote that, when I realized that quality in this, right before the Therefore symbol goes through those animal-like shapes and the sound almost sounds like a musicbox. It sounds like one of those little wind-up things. It's like it almost goes through a picture book of animals as I'm talking about the forest. There <sup>1</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> representational in the least but there's a serpent and the snake comes across, and the serpent bites it and then releases it, and the soloman the frog comes up. And the Therefore symbol, the top point is its eye, and then it fades. These are what was going through my head when I made this. (right, that's interesting)



Q: Those are like hidden presences ( exactly, there made to be embedded in it) It's funny because that's exactly a process that I go through (calling in presences and hiding them and allowing them to be there without actually-)

H: It's a way of having my motor run. I mean these are present in my mind that are very acutely objectified in my head as I'm working. That's what I'm working on is to try to get that so it is just that much that, so it's not like those came

S: I'm buzzing on two different levels of this thing . First of all what I want to say is that the symbolism, obviously, is not <sup>a problem</sup> heavy because it isn't foregrounded as symbolism at all (let's face it the main one would be the Logos) (the tree) The point is your attention is moving so much in this other space <sup>than the image itself</sup> so ~~is~~ no more than the words themselves taken on the page, spell out its meaning . The images themselves don't spell it out either. T So that there is this continuous undercutting and there's actually the play between, say, ~~between~~ the symbolic resonance of the "breath-taking" image, on the one hand, And the attempt to create the verbal analogue. So that you're saying "cross my heart <sup>and hope to die</sup>" and for sure, somewhere in one's mind as one sees that one thinks "cross my heart" . Is it actually part of the text? (sure, it's the only thing that's sung in the whole thing) Right, but <sup>in a</sup> very <sup>in a</sup> ~~added~~ <sup>reflected</sup> ~~in a~~ way. I think I heard that being said but you have to actually put your attention into that in order to hear it say "cross my heart." So you're getting "cross my heart" which is one level of language, which is extremely removed from the radiance symbolism of this glowing phallus. It's a kind of luminous phallus in the heart that becomes the cross . It's just a pole of light, which comes first?

H: What happens is that it's a heart and then part of the heart curls in and curls back out and then the cross melts down and forms itself . The ~~rays~~ becomes a cloaked figure, like a death figure. Those are stacked like tarot cards.





2 The underground, upperground tree.

3 as nervous system

M You know it's funny, I talked with Woody and he said that when he saw the tape and showed him this tape, and he liked it all right, but when he looked at it again he said, Gary, maybe it's too positive, especially the last part, it's too beautiful, it's too incredible laughter, and I thought that was a bit misleading because it's going to continue.

I see.

S Right, that's not an end. You know, seeing this now for the third time it has a very definite harmonious close.

M I know, it definitely is a part

You know, it's a little bit like the question of whether or not something is really positive. The thing is that this is also so profoundly centering.

Q That's the thing, it's not in danger of the things that are bad about over positive art. It's not that there are positive that sound them bad, it's that we get a used when we see things get too positive because it's a very popular art, it's a religion. The visionary moment is to make you think of

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In a way the tree is a sort of gift, it's a

It's a ritual space, in the sense that your own being becomes a

coming out of the tree in the sense of bounty

It's a ritual space, in the sense that your own being becomes a

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happened to look like birds. So then to decide to do that -- of course it

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Q: Explain what you mean by big "S" over little "s" .

S O K, the conventional French semiotic notation for signifier/signified; meaning, that which is signified, <sup>by which is not</sup> ~~is not~~ things in the world ~~are~~ the meanings of the words. <sup>in the image</sup> So you say birds and that goes to some place in my mind where I have stored the meaning of the word bird as opposed to any specific concrete image. So by it's the concurrent streams of having a completely smooth flow of imagery concurrent with the stream of language. And it's the concurrence of those streams that sets up a totally new relationship between language and meaning that is unlike the relationship of language and its text in its conventional semiotic situation.

M There's some other stuff or something of how that is in other words if you had water or whatever if you have the flow of images and the flow of words it wouldn't be that it's got to be more than that they're concurrent

No, no, that's a condition that you have those two streams, then what you've got is you've got the language which refers to the image stream <sup>(on the other side)</sup> by direct pointing, rather than by ~~signifier/signified~~ signifier/signified in that area of meaning that one experiences is not the area of meaning that one experiences when one is reading a text when one is reading a text one is not <sup>is</sup> ~~not~~ dealing with ~~signifier/signified~~ a signifier/signified. But here you have ~~signifier/signified~~ signifier/signified. So the two streams are in a different process of formation and which immediately capture the <sup>So that the words as</sup>

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other hand you've got this other thing which is passing by which is something

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'corde...a' which refers to the living reality behind the language or inside the language. Not so much behind or inside because there's no such topology really suggested but that the existence of the language really depended on its actual life, the fact that it is alive and that's sort of a mysterious thing to be like little beings does that mean we now have to worry about words having feelings too way plants have feelings or secret lives of words. But it's the fact that you cannot put the word in a zoo without losing its actual ability to be, to take breaths. Because that's the other thing about breathtaking there that you ~~hear~~ <sup>is</sup> yourself taking a breath as you say it, there are certain very noticeable breaths that you take. There's one point where you actually laugh a little bit, saying a phrase.

M That whole thing, I have to say it's not really when I thought of doing that part where it says 'this is a song and dance, that's entertainment' another thing altogether unless I did think of Lori Anderson.

S It comes off the hand, there's a hand, there's a figure that doesn't quite become a hand at does all the things a hand does, right around that line.

R I know what you mean. And then there's this sort of bird-like thing when I say "bats". The word "silence" at the point in which it occurs in that breath-taking, one notable thing at it is that there's no silence anywhere. The sentence stops, therefore breaths but there's a lot of loud stuff going on over there and all kinds of stuff going on in silence, that word is sort of already in relationship with silence. I think that's a metaphor. The word has to get near to the kind of silence that you can hear. It's a kind of a silence that you can hear, at some kind of a point that represents an experience and a sound. Again, it refers to a silence that you already know. You listen to it to sure to say it. When he's taking a breath, he means that by silence. But then there's the sense of a breath that's going on and on but it's a silent breath.

A But that which happens in another part of the tape is also a direct address to the person who has gone through this and presumably from this incredible complex image is sort of holding their breath. Because it has that thing of, how far is this going to go? first there's this tree, then there's this house coming out, then the roots of the tree are forming this word, I mean like which it could go, layer and layer and layer

3 But the point of it isn't simply that there are a lot of years of stuff

4 But it's that "heavenly" movies in all these different areas

It was in terms of what we've talked about of world being alive and this kind of, just how the tape is kind of alive, what will happen, is that say this is 45 minutes long. In other words, with that sort of continuous opening, you know, like doors almost, after you've gone through and say 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10, with actually have a quantitative super-effect. That's the area of pure investigation, there's no way of answering that beforehand because there isn't any way of knowing that.)

[illegible]



it's a question of total sense of right relationships and that's what's really important to me about the connection with what I'm trying to do in poetry, which is that the problem that we were discussing before about the rate <sup>at</sup> ~~with~~ which you perceive these things video, for me, and doing the few video texts that I've done now, gives me an opportunity to settle that issue in very particular ways. So for me it was I always think if I could read it then it would be the question of whether I could read it right. And then there was always the question of what was right because everytime that I would read it it would feel right or if it did feel right it felt right or if it didn't feel right it didn't feel right, but it was like I would have a text that out of the five times I would read a text, two times I would read it right. Those two times would be very different from each other but they would both be right.

So I've got this poem now that I read and I have a way of reading it very loud and very fast and very intense, and the same poem could be read very slowly quiet.

But it's a question of striking those right times, those right timings, it's like T'ai Chi, <sup>Shi Jung</sup> ~~song june~~ S. ~~totally~~ K. <sup>in</sup> Chi there's a term called <sup>Shi Jung</sup> ~~song june~~ which is usually translated as "right timing" Now "right timing" doesn't keep an particular rate because "in Chi" is done extremely slowly, or extremely fast it can be as fast as someone is pushing you and you hitting them, or it can be slow so that you can cure people in the movement. And the right timing is independent of time is independent of that so much that in the 19th century has been the extra point in any movement about what rhythm means, speed and that is a text, this is that it doesn't matter. Metronomes can be used.

<sup>Lenny Young</sup>  
remember making ~~some~~ making about it. It's about what you're doing, it's about the rhythm. It's a function of the things not fixed objects that you can set up and then they're identical.



week, a whole big part of it is about that tree in ways that have to do with that.

H I heard recently that there used to be two of them ~~identical~~ and one was cut down, he looked to the right of it and there was a stump which used to be an almost identical tree of that tree do you know the ~~double tree~~ <sup>Theodor Sturgeon</sup> thing, "Pressing Jewels." Within that story they find buried or something and then you <sup>and</sup> do something with the word, makes everything two of everything. And then it had about these two trees that were identical. I'm sure I'm not getting this right but it had something to do with these jewels being able to double things or they were found by double trees.

S That oak tree is one of the keys to Barrytown H. It's like the gates. The other weird thing, just talking about more doubles, it's words because there is <sup>a</sup> whole thing that happens there, is that just by pure accident right across from that tree just a little bit up, there is a building which is called "The Oaks," that has nothing whatsoever to do with ~~oaks~~ <sup>oak trees. The people</sup> ~~who own~~ <sup>own</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~named~~ <sup>named</sup> Oaks.

One thing I want to know as perceiving this tape in relation to me is whether there is a sense of <sup>the</sup> one discovering things in the sandbox of language. In other words, things that you guys have probably gone through a long time ago. I watching a movie discover things in language.

H I think that's all I can say. I think that's all that's happening in language is discovering it. It's not really the movie brought you that you can look at it. What you can look at is that movie and that movie is a very short way, it's like a language that you can look at. It's like a language that's interesting as language because it's not like what people say. It gets support from a whole lot of other things. Other people, not are in the air now.

H I think that's all I can say. I think that's all that's happening in language is discovering it. It's not really the movie brought you that you can look at it. What you can look at is that movie and that movie is a very short way, it's like a language that you can look at. It's like a language that's interesting as language because it's not like what people say. It gets support from a whole lot of other things. Other people, not are in the air now.



holds the right point of view, quotes the Koran, or has had other sort of religious sanction. It's the opposite. If it's the real thing, can happen in a fairly authentic reading of the text, if you can travel back to your own truth in relation to the truth of the text, then the text has that miraculous quality we have spoken of. So in a sense it's appropriate that we're doing this in the process of the work itself, as it goes on tomorrow being imposed, because this is a work that is involved with the act of its own reality. So, on I allow that beautiful image to stay, that are the conditions under which that image can stay. Part of it is just the power of the image, and part of it is the sustaining context that you've created that allows that image to happen in this way. Another part of it is for you is the reference to the power of the oak tree which you have discussed as is which is closure is appropriate to come out in the ta'wil or exegesis.

Now you know the oak tree will appear in "primarily speaking" but as it is laughter. Now, probably the most typical reaction to this work among the uninitiated will be to the effect of "why doesn't this guy do something that I can relate to in my life?" Why is he existing in this pure realm of idea, concept, thought? And the people who aren't going to get it that will be one of the key reasons. It's like Louis Simpson said to me about Blake, who he'd just been reading about in my work, Blake is great but I want to recognize the reality shown in a work, I don't see my life in it. So after that, after that, after that, he said "they're not going to get it." The power of the whole text itself, in the larger sense of text.

(irrelevant)

S: Video and language

... but it's also living.





The signified aspect of a word would be what could be given in a definition, some kind of general statement about what the word means, some general description of the set of

As opposed to that,  
things as opposed to the word "silence" meaning the absence of sound, silence as  
all of the possible things that the word could be used to point to

32 Yes, that is what I was saying earlier about the word taking back its original  
life, that you have to see it as having that power, that what you get from it is that  
it has that power, but I like your formulation

Q There are two things that I thought of. One is what you said about people who won't get into the work because of what it's not. I just I'm wondering about the reaching out, you know, touching and being touched -- the overall thing, especially visceral experience of it, is a kind of the richness of it. Is perhaps there for them

In other words even determining on the last segment -- you know, to free or not to free  
[laughter] -- I'm just wondering how embedded ~~that~~ <sup>this</sup> is, if subconsciously I was taking  
that into consideration

Q: What?

1 an audience I mean this is the first time this has come up for me, because you  
in this  
brought it up. Even myself in the process, got lost, in the sense of a rare, "hink  
and being fully conscious of what is going on and then going through "the process" of  
writing it, experiencing it and then realizing that it was a process and not a  
having a "retrograde" my steps, of not being able to retrograde my steps and then days  
later coming back from another point and then realizing that it was, and  
much like a labyrinth

Q. I've had this experience so many times

H. And then thinking [about others] , And I'm as close to the work as one can be

Q Maybe; [laughter]

[illegible]

... ..

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2000 38



M: But remember this is in the beginning and you don't know ...

S: No, but it's that first move, you're talking about the point in which the heart ...

M: No, no, I'm talking about the very beginning of the tape, where you hear the base drum ...

S: <sup>why</sup>~~What~~ don't you go back to it <sup>sets</sup> [Gary ~~marks~~ up video to beginning of tape]  
[plays to : "This that and the other thing"]

S: OK stop it there .... So what you do is you establish ...

M: It's as if I'm saying that these totally abstract things, I'm playing with them and using these words as ...

S: You're setting up your vocabulary, your multidimensional vocabulary...

M: Yes, three things ...

S: This<sup>h</sup>, that and the other thing -- and, the curve in it is that you have this that and the other thing, square circle and triangle. but in between you have a catastrophe<sup>h</sup>.. You have a transformational process that's given in there. I mean before it becomes a triangle, it goes through a cusp or whatever, so that even though . . . there's a kind of parodic aspect to it. You were pretending to set up a univocal relationship between the word "this, that, and the other thing" and these signs, but at the same time you're already in a world in which the visual images are undergoing such transformations that even that very simple attempt to set up a one-to-one relationship between words and signs ...

M: But this is what I'm interested in terms of intention and the visualizing, for me, of ... and now in describing this, how it falls short of me going through this process and then what is there. You know, I went very consciously through why "This" had the Square and the base drum, and the Circle had That<sup>h</sup>, and it has to do with humor and all these various things .... So This, to me, when I visualize the word itself and then I think of the first thing as ~~the~~ foundation, the square in relationship to the circle, which one would be ...

S: There's even a sexual joke in there ...

H: No, wait a ~~minute~~ second ... So, then, That also has a kind of... it could also be a square. But the Circle could not as easily be This, because the Circle is much more of a universal symbol, even though the Square is a symbol, the Circle is more of a symbol ... plus the cymbal, the crash cymbal, is with the Circle. This is the basedrum. So then the Other Thing, definitely, for me, the Triangle would be the Other Thing .. .. I mean, for everyone ...

S: For sure ...

H: There's no argument there, even though it's totally ridiculous [laughter] ...

S: No, it's not ridiculous ... I'll tell you what it is ... It's racial memory about the history of geometry ...

H: Wait, wait, but then also the sound, you see, on the basedrum comes before This -- book This -- then the cymbal happens after the circle is formed, and then the Thing happens simultaneously, and the sound comes out of the word "Thing," the sound comes from ... --it's this handclap, Thing-- I mean the intention is to get not only a thingy sound like thinng [Nazalizes strongly], you know like weird or coming from a different place, not your basic trip, but also to come out of the sound of the word itself, the sound and the word are like this [makes sign with hand of unity]. So in the next section when the triangle comes up, that part that's hard to see ... [goes to set up video]

S: [sound of drum comes on] Well, the drum is also the initiation of ... I mean there are so many fakes in here, in each phase, you pretend like it's going to be this geometrical discrimination and then ...

[Tape plays: "This that and the other thing" with sounds] S: [imitating gong-like sound of tape] ~~802222~~ Dawing!

H: Now this [laughs]-- the sound of one hand clapping in one man's mind, that's referring to that sound that you just heard, in terms of my making it. And then it goes from positive to negative, you know, after it goes across the screen, I mean definitely the part that goes underneath about drumming is just sort of like, hoo haa ...

S: Yeah, the fake is that we're now in uh multimedia sixties expo-67-land with bunches of images and words going by and nobody having thought about anything

[Tape plays: "Things are going to happen ... happenstance"]

H: OK, not only does the image invert, positive-negative, but the statement is a kind of inversion of what I said ...

S: "One man's mind clapping in the sound of ..."

H: ...I mean as much as you can invert ... as a negative image, OK. And that is also saying, I'm questioning whether this can be anything but something happening inside my mind. I mean is this only something that is inside myself?

S: You mean those relations? No, those relationships are all discoverable if one has the opportunity to do what we're doing now, that is, treating it as a text and reading it slowly ...

H: This image here is on the screen long enough for one to read ...

S: But that's where the question of hermeneutics is important here. I've been thinking about this all week, that at a certain point with mixed media question it just comes back to hermeneutics, it's no different from being a text. It's no longer the physical quality of the text that gives it character. The possibility that one has the opportunity of looking at it closely ~~and~~ and working out through discussion and through reflection and through examining the experience what it's all about makes it a text ...

Q & H: Right, right ...

S: So these things go by, and that they're embedded in there is part of the scatter of what's going by ...

H: That's why in the end I accepted, especially before this inverts, the speed of the amount of time that that was on there, was that ..., especially at the beginning of something, one's not going to be ready to read, and so it was OK that it was ...

S: ...slow...

H: It was like a detail that was embedded in there.. It's like if you were to take in this room and see the general things on the surface but you might not see the little pebble that's over there, but it's there ....

S: Well, there are so many amazing things about it, because you're parodying the beginning

of a film or a video work of art, I mean you've got an initial presentation and then the announcement of a title, a statement about what's going to happen, and then another set of titles, and a creation <sup>in</sup> of its sound effects of an ambiance as if that's what it's all going to be about, and all that's completely fake, because what's going on is completely different. What's ~~max~~ happening is that the mind is being prepared physically, the mind-body, to get into a space to deal with everything else that's coming on, by giving you the optimum chatter. And the chatter is created by the fact that a demand is being made to read something that can't be read ....

H: In that sense the last fake is the whole cross-section, the fake of the subject-matter.

S: Well, except that that's sustained, the problem is that you <sup>fake</sup> ~~make~~ yourself out there, it just recurs in another facet of its own....

Q: Well, it's good to have made the point in this way that the dialogical process becomes integral with the work in different ways. The thing that we've been driving at in the dialogical criticism is that it's not criticism that stands aside.

H: That's what I discovered by writing this thing which I should definitely show you. In other words it was the situation of [being?] asked to show this, I'd just finished it, and I'd already promised this place that I was going to do a lecture, and on the train I wrote ~~a~~ thing, ..... which then became embedded in the tape in the sense of playing again on another level, of playing with [the fact] that this is preceding the tape and setting certain things up that would be repeated but in a little different way, like different angles, like those sentences, you know, the hand clapping ... . Some of those phrases are even in the lecture, but they're a little different, or a phrase will come up in a different order. And I talk about certain intentions but in a sort of embedded way, and I don't say well this is what I did, it's totally another work. It was ~~was~~ really interesting because I first read that, which obviously sets it up in some way, but then I showed the tape, and then I read it again, and the tape actually set up the second reading of the lecture in a totally different way, because the lecture actually becomes a work that the tape sets up, that goes in a little different direction ....